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388-68 AD/C1

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20 October 1965

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Franco-Soviet Negotiations on Space Cooperation

1. The French and the Soviets may have negotiated agreements in the field of space cooperation during talks which have just ended in Paris.

2. Press reports at the conclusion of the talks were vague and referred only to an "exchange of views" on cooperation. Information from [REDACTED] indicates, however, that the Soviet delegation offered to stand the costs for French use of Soviet communications satellites and for a Soviet rocket to orbit a French satellite.

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3. The Soviet delegation's visit marks a continuing effort by the USSR to broaden contacts with Paris and encourage De Gaulle in pursuing an independent policy which in many important respects is consequent with Soviet interests in Europe. In his 29 September speech before the CPSU plenum, Soviet party leader Brezhnev was optimistic over the prospects for Soviet-French relations and Soviet leaders can be expected to give Couve de Murville a red carpet reception when he visits Moscow in late October. Aside from the technical benefits of joint space collaboration which would accrue to the USSR, the Russians would find it politically advantageous to press for some sort of formal agreement with the French on the question. The Soviets are specifically interested in disrupting French participation in joint projects with the US, including the use of American rockets and launch facilities and participation in the US communications satellite system.

4. Franco-Soviet cooperation in space might also disrupt French participation in ELDO and ESRO, the European cooperative space organizations although it would almost certainly have no effect on French plans to orbit a small satellite with a French-made launch vehicle later this year.

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5. The French, who took the original initiative in proposing space cooperation during Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's visit to Paris in April, undoubtedly see this as another way of demonstrating their independence of the US.

6. According to Soviet press reports, yet another high-level Soviet scientific delegation arrived in Paris on 18 October at the invitation of the French. The reasons for this new visit are unknown but it may also be related to Franco-Soviet space negotiations.

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OCI - NOTICE OF SPECIAL PAPER

No. 388-65  
SUBJECT

Date

Franco-Soviet Negotiations on Space Cooperation

REQUESTED BY

Legislative Counsel/ STATINTL

PURPOSE

For Senate Space and Astronautics Committee

DESIRED LENGTH :

SPECIAL DISSEM

3 - STATINTL GRAPHICS?

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